



**Oifig an Stiúirthóra Náisiúnta, Acmhainní Daonna**  
Feidhmeannacht na Seirbhíse Sláinte  
Ospidéal Dr. Steevens'  
Baile Átha Cliath 8

**Office of the National Director of Human Resources**  
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**To:** Chief Executive Officer  
Each National Director  
Each Assistant National Director HR  
Each Assistant Chief Finance Officers  
Each Hospital Group CEO  
Each Hospital Group Director of HR  
Each Chief Officer CHOs  
Each Head of HR CHOs  
Head of HR, PCRS  
Each CEO Section 38 Agencies  
Each HR Manager Section 38 Agencies  
Each Employee Relations Manager  
Each Group Director of Nursing & Midwifery  
Each Group Director of Midwifery  
Each Clinical Director  
Director National Ambulance Service

**From:** Anne Marie Hoey, National Director of Human Resources

**Date:** 16<sup>th</sup> July 2020

**RE:** HR Circular 049/2020 Leave Arrangements For Employees who return from non-essential travel overseas – COVID-19

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Dear Colleagues

I refer to HR Memo dated 25 May 2020 which outlines the importance of facilitating employees to avail of their annual leave entitlement to the maximum extent possible and ensuring that, at a minimum, employees are granted their statutory annual leave entitlement in accordance with the Organisation of Working Time Act, 1997.

Queries have arisen in relation to employees who intend to travel abroad during their annual leave and would be subject to a period of restricted movement upon their return. The Irish authorities currently advise against all non-essential travel overseas until further notice. The Irish authorities require anyone coming into Ireland, apart from Northern Ireland, to restrict their movements for 14 days.

I wish to advise that the Department of Public Expenditure and Reform (DPER) has issued a **Supplementary FAQ to accompany the Guidance re working arrangements in the Public Service during COVID-19** dated 14 July 2020 (copy attached) which addresses this issue. In accordance with this guidance, *responsibility to provide for the period of restricted movement arising from non-essential travel overseas is a matter for each individual employee.*

All employees who intend to undertake non-essential travel overseas must make provision by way of an annual leave or unpaid leave application for the additional period of restricted movement, in line with their employer's normal rules and procedures for applying for annual leave or unpaid leave<sup>1</sup>. Employees will **not** be permitted to work from home in lieu of taking annual leave or unpaid leave during the 14-day period of restricted movement.

Employees must advise their manager of their intention to travel abroad and submit their leave application to cover the additional period of 14 days' absence from work due to the requirement to restrict their movements upon return to Ireland. The leave application required to cover the additional period of restricted movement must be approved by the manager prior to commencement of annual leave/travel abroad and a record retained. Employees are required to give as much notice as possible of their intention to travel abroad so that the necessary arrangements (e.g. substitution cover) can be made to cover the employee's additional period of absence having regard to service requirements.

The requirement that health service employees inform their manager of plans to travel abroad and adhere to the requirement to restrict their movements for 14 days upon return to Ireland is necessary for the protection of public health and for service planning.

This guidance will be reviewed in accordance with any changes to public health and travel advice.

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<sup>1</sup> The option of unpaid leave may include applying to avail of parental leave where the employee has a statutory entitlement under the Parental Leave Acts 1998-2019.

Please ensure that this Circular is brought to the attention of managers within your area of responsibility and disseminated to all employees (including those who are absent from work on any type of leave).

### **Queries**

Queries from individual employees or managers regarding these leave arrangements should be referred to local HR/Employee Relations Departments.

Queries from HR/Employee Relations Departments on this Circular may be referred to Anna Killilea, Corporate Employee Relations, HR Directorate, 63-64 Adelaide Road, Dublin 2.

Tel: 01 6626966, Email: [anna.killilea@hse.ie](mailto:anna.killilea@hse.ie)

Please note that the National HR Helpdesk is also available to take queries on 1850 444 925 or [ask.hr@hse.ie](mailto:ask.hr@hse.ie).

Yours sincerely



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**Anne Marie Hoey**  
**National Director Human Resources**



“To view the Health Services People Strategy 2019 - 2024 please click [here](#).”  
**Need information and advice on COVID-19 Go to [www.hse.ie/coronavirus](http://www.hse.ie/coronavirus)**